IAG5holP UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT 1 SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK 2 3 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, New York, N.Y. 18 Cr. 36 (JPO) 4 V. 5 CYNTHIA HOLDER, 6 Defendant. -----x 7 8 October 16, 2018 12:35 p.m. 9 10 Before: 11 HON. J. PAUL OETKEN, 12 District Judge 13 14 **APPEARANCES** GEOFFREY S. BERMAN 15 United States Attorney for the 16 Southern District of New York BY: AMANDA K. KRAMER 17 Assistant United States Attorneys THOMPSON HINE, LLP (NYC) 18 Attorneys for Defendant 19 BY: NORMAN A. BLOCH EMILY J. MATHIEU 20 21 22 23 24 25

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1 (Case called) THE DEPUTY CLERK: Starting with the government 2 3 counsel, please state your name for the record. 4 MS. KRAMER: Good afternoon, your Honor. Amanda 5 Kramer for the government. THE COURT: Good afternoon. 6 7 MR. BLOCH: Norman Bloch and Emily Mathieu for 8 Ms. Holder. 9 THE COURT: Good afternoon. 10 MR. BLOCH: Good afternoon, your Honor. 11 THE COURT: I have been informed, Ms. Holder, that you 12 wish to plead guilty to Counts One, Two, Four and Five of the 13 indictment; is that correct? 14 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor. 15 THE COURT: You can remain seated. I will have you stand in a minute briefly when I swear you in. Before 16 17 accepting your plea I will ask you a number of questions, and the reason for that is to establish, to my satisfaction, that 18 19 you wish to plead guilty because are you in fact guilty and not 20 for some other reason. If at any point you don't understand 21 any of my questions, or you would like a further opportunity to 22 speak with your lawyer, please, let me know. All right? 23 THE DEFENDANT: Thank you, your Honor.

THE COURT: Please place the defendant under oath.

THE DEPUTY CLERK: Will you please stand, raise your

IAG5holP 1 right hand? (Defendant sworn) 2 3 THE COURT: You may remain seated. You are now under oath and that means if you answer 4 any of my questions falsely, your answers could be used in a 5 prosecution for perjury. 6 7 Do you understand that? 8 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor. 9 THE COURT: Please tell me your full name. 10 THE DEFENDANT: Cynthia Anne Holder, and that is Anne 11 with an E. THE COURT: How old are you? 12 13 52 years old, sir. THE DEFENDANT: 14 THE COURT: How far did you go in school. THE DEFENDANT: I received a bachelors degree from the 15 University of Houston. 16 17 THE COURT: And have you ever been treated or 18 hospitalized for any mental illness? 19 THE DEFENDANT: No, your Honor. 20 THE COURT: Are you now or have you recently been 21 under the care of a psychiatrist or a doctor?

23 THE COURT: And have you ever been hospitalized or treated for addiction to drugs or alcohol? 24

> No, your Honor. THE DEFENDANT:

THE DEFENDANT: No, your Honor.

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1	THE COURT: In the past 24 hours, have you taken any
2	drugs, medicine, or alcohol?
3	THE DEFENDANT: No, sir. I have not.
4	THE COURT: And is your mind clear today?
5	THE DEFENDANT: Yes, sir.
6	THE COURT: You understand what is happening in this
7	proceeding?
8	THE DEFENDANT: Yes, sir. I do.
9	THE COURT: Does either counsel have any doubt as to
10	the defendant's competence to plead?
11	MS. KRAMER: No, your Honor.
12	MR. BLOCH: No, your Honor.
13	THE COURT: Based on her responses to my questions and
14	her demeanor as I observe it, I find that the defendant is
15	competent to enter a plea of guilty at this time.
16	Ms. Holder, have you had a sufficient opportunity to
17	discuss your case with your lawyer including the specific
18	charges you intend to plead guilty to, as well as any possible
19	defenses and the consequences of pleading guilty?
20	THE DEFENDANT: Yes, I have, your Honor.
21	THE COURT: And are you satisfied with your attorney's
22	representation of you?
23	THE DEFENDANT: Yes, sir. I am.
24	THE COURT: I am now going to explain certain
25	constitutional rights that you have. These are rights that you

give up when you plead guilty, and therefore I want to make sure you understand what those rights are.

Under the Constitution and laws of the United States you are entitled to a speedy and public trial by a jury on the charges contained in the indictment.

Do you understand that?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes, sir.

THE COURT: And at that trial you will be presumed innocent and the government would be required to prove you guilty by competent evidence and beyond a reasonable doubt before you could be found guilty. You would not have to prove that you were innocent. A jury of 12 people would have to agree unanimously that you were guilty.

Do you understand that?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor.

THE COURT: At that trial and at every stage of your case you would have the right to be represented by an attorney and if you could not afford an attorney, one would be appointed to represent you.

Do you understand that?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes, sir. I do.

THE COURT: During a trial, the witnesses for the government would have to come to court and testify in your presence, and your lawyer would be able to cross-examine the witnesses for the government, object to evidence offered by the

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government and, if you wish, issue subpoenas and offer evidence and compel witnesses to testify in your defense.

Do you understand that?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor.

THE COURT: At a trial, although you would have the right to testify if you chose to, you would also have the right not to testify, and no suggestion or inference of guilt could be drawn from the fact that you did not testify if that is what you chose.

Do you understand that?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor.

THE COURT: If you were convicted at a trial, you would also have the right to appeal that verdict.

Do you understand that?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes, sir, I do.

THE COURT: Even at this time, as you are entering this plea, you do have the right to change your mind, plead not guilty, and go to trial.

Do you understand that?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor.

THE COURT: If you do plead guilty and I accept your plea, you will be giving up your right to a trial and the other rights that I have just described, there will be no trial, but rather, I will enter a judgment of guilty on these counts which will be a conviction on those counts and that I will sentence

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you simply on the basis of your guilty plea on that conviction based on the guilty plea. I will not sentence you now but I will sentence you in several months from now after receiving a presentence report that the Probation Department will prepare, as well as any written submissions from your lawyer and from the government's counsel.

Do you understand that?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor.

THE COURT: And, if you plead guilty, you will also have to give up your right not to incriminate yourself because in a few minutes I will ask you about what you did to satisfy myself that you are in fact guilty as charged.

Do you understand that?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor.

THE COURT: Have you received a copy of the indictment containing the charges against you in this case?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes, sir. I have.

THE COURT: Have you read it and discussed it with your lawyer?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor.

THE COURT: Do you understand the charges against you?

THE DEFENDANT: I do, your Honor.

THE COURT: Ms. Kramer, would the government like to state what the elements are of these offenses?

MS. KRAMER: Certainly, your Honor.

The defendant is charged in Counts One, Two, Four and Five of the indictment, and the government is prepared to prove the following elements at trial.

First, for Count One, which charges the defendant with conspiring to defraud the United States, the government would prove the following elements: First, that the defendant entered into an agreement; second, that the object of the agreement was to obstruct a lawful function of the government by deceitful or dishonest means; and third, that at least one overt act was committed in furtherance of that agreement.

Count Two charges the defendant with conspiring to commit wire fraud in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1349. There are two elements of this offense that the government is prepared to prove. First, that two or more persons entered into a conspiracy to commit wire fraud, the elements of which I will explain in a moment; and second, that the defendant knowingly and willfully became a member of the conspiracy.

Counts Four and Five each charge the defendant with the substantive offense of wire fraud. The elements of wire fraud which the government would prove beyond a reasonable doubt are, first, that there was a scheme or artifice to defraud or to obtain money or property by materially false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, or promises; and second, that the defendant knowingly and willfully participated in the

scheme or artifice to defraud with knowledge of its fraudulent nature and with specific intent to defraud. Finally, third, that an execution of that scheme the defendant used or caused the use of interstate wire.

The government would also prove at trial, by a preponderance of the evidence, that at least one act in furtherance of each offense was committed in the Southern District of New York.

THE COURT: Would you also like to make a factual proffer as to what the government would prove if there were a trial?

MS. KRAMER: Certainly, your Honor.

The government would prove that first, with respect to both conspiracy counts, that in or about April 2015 the defendant agreed, with others, to participate in a scheme to misappropriate and utilize important valuable confidential information from the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, also known as the PCAOB. That valuable confidential information consisted of the identity of the engagements, the public issuers that KPMG — the accounting firm — had audited and that the PCAOB intended to inspect as part of its annual inspection process. The PCAOB's inspection process and the reports that are generated from that inspection process annually are transmitted to and utilized and relied upon by the United States Securities and Exchange Commission — the SEC —

in carrying out various functions including regulatory and enforcement matters.

The defendants entered into an agreement to misappropriate this confidential information for KPMG's benefit and to utilize it to improve KPMG's inspection results which would better position KPMG both with respect to the PCAOB and with the SEC which was regularly communicating with KPMG about its performance which was something that KPMG and the defendants in this case were well aware of as the government would prove at trial. The defendants entered into this unlawful scheme and the conspiracy continued from approximately April 2015 through in or about February 2017, when certain individuals at KPMG learned about the defendants' schemes.

The government would prove at trial all of the foregoing through various types of evidence including witness testimony from individuals from KPMG, from the SEC, from the PCAOB, among others, and through various documents including text messages and e-mails that were exchanged among and between the defendants in the case, some of whom were in Manhattan and the Southern District of New York at the time that the wires were used and almost all of which constituted the use of interstate wires because there were text messages and e-mails that were sent across state lines.

As part of the defendants' scheme, beginning in about April 2015, a confidential, valuable list of the issuers that

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were audited by KPMG and that were to be inspected in 2015 was taken from the PCAOB and was shared with and utilized by defendants who were employed by KPMG at the time. That has been known, as we have discussed in other submissions in this case, as the 2015 list. That list was provided and utilized in response to a request by individuals employed by KPMG at the time who then utilized that information, took specific actions upon it with an eye to improving KPMG's inspection results, and therefore its standing both with PCAOB and with the SEC.

Again, in 2016, the partial list of the engagements to be inspected by the PCAOB was misappropriated from the PCAOB, was shared with individuals at KPMG based on a request for such confidential information, a request that was ongoing from 2015 forward conveyed both by words and in actions, and KPMG employees who are defendants in this case utilized that confidential misappropriated PCAOB information in an attempt to improve KPMG's inspection results to improve its standing with the SEC and, among other things, actions that were taken with respect to the 2016 list included what was referred to as a stealth re-review of accounting work papers where efforts were taken to conceal the fact that confidential information had been obtained from individuals other than those who were a part of the conspiracy, and the accounting work papers, the auditing work papers that the PCAOB inspectors would be looking at and examining were re-reviewed with an eye to improving them to

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possibly affect KPMG's inspection performance and therefore its standing with PCAOB and with the SEC.

Again, in 2017, this time an entire list of the inspections that were to take place in 2017 was illegally misappropriated from the PCAOB and utilized by individuals at KPMG to improve KPMG's inspection results and therefore its standing with the PCAOB and the SEC. Among other things, certain engagement partners, individuals responsible for the particular audits that were to be the subject of the PCAOB inspection, were informed of the fact that they had been chosen for inspection and were informed so early that in addition to being able to do the type of work paper re-review that was illegally done in 2016, at this point it was possible to have more of an effect even on the audits because the audit opinions had not been issued and the audit work had not been complete and the scheme was thwarted only because other individuals at KPMG learned of it and stopped further action by the defendants in this case.

THE COURT: Thank you.

Ms. Holder, I also want to explain the maximum penalties for these counts. Each of the four counts has a maximum under the statute -- we will get to the guidelines in a minute -- which is separate, but under the statute, Count One, conspiracy to defraud the United States, carries a maximum of five years' imprisonment, there is a maximum fine of the

greatest of \$250,000 or two times the total gain from the offense or two times the total loss to others from the offense, and a \$100 special assessment, and there is a maximum term of supervised release of three years. When I say supervised release that means that you are subject to monitoring following a release from any term of imprisonment and there are terms and conditions of supervised release that you must comply with, essentially like being on probation, and if you fail to comply with them you can be returned to prison without a jury trial.

Count Two, conspiracy to commit wire fraud carries a maximum 20 years' imprisonment, a maximum fine of the greatest of \$250,000, or two times the total gain from the offense or two times the total loss to others from the offense, and a \$100 special assessment, and a maximum term of supervised release of three years.

Counts Four and Five, which both charge wire fraud, carry a maximum of 20 years' imprisonment and a maximum fine of the greatest of \$250,000 or two times the total loss to others from the offense or gain to the defendant from the offense, and a \$100 special assessment, as well as a maximum term of supervised release of three years.

Ms. Holder, are you a United States citizen?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor. I am.

THE COURT: Also, if your attorney or anyone has attempted to predict what your sentence will be, I want to

explain to you that no one can promise you or assure you what your sentence will be, not the government or your attorney or anyone else, because I'm the one who is going to determine your sentence. Again, not now, but only after receiving the presentence report and any written submissions that I received prior to sentencing, and I will consider any departures or variances from the Sentencing Guidelines after considering the Guidelines themselves, and then ultimately determine what an appropriate sentence for you is under the factors in the statute known as 18 U.S.C. 3553(a).

Have you had a chance to discuss sentencing with your attorney?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor. I have.

THE COURT: Do you understand that even if your sentence is different from what anyone has told you or what you expect, you will still be bound by your guilty plea and will not be allowed to withdraw your plea of guilty?

THE DEFENDANT: I do understand, that, your Honor.

THE COURT: Has anyone threatened you in any way or forced you to plead guilty?

THE DEFENDANT: No, your Honor. They have not.

THE COURT: You have not signed a plea agreement with the government; is that correct?

THE DEFENDANT: No, your Honor. I have not.

THE COURT: There is a letter that I have a copy of

dated October 5 which is called a Pimentel letter which sets 1 forth the government's current view of what the guideline range 2 3 would be in this case. Have you received a copy of that Pimentel letter? 4 5 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor. I have. 6 THE COURT: You have had a chance to read it and 7 discuss it with your lawyer? 8 THE DEFENDANT: I have, your Honor. 9 THE COURT: Under the Pimentel letter, which is not a 10 binding agreement but it is the government's current view of 11 what the guideline range is, the letter states that the 12 guideline range is 41 months to 51 months' imprisonment and 13 there is a quideline fine range of \$15,000 to \$150,000. 14 is the government's current view of the guideline range and it 15 is not binding on the government and that guideline calculation is also not binding on me, I will make my own determination of 16 17 the guidelines as well as considering the guidelines as well as 18 any departures or possible variances from them. 19 Do you understand that? 20 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor. 21 THE COURT: Having gone through this colloquy, do you 22

still wish to plead guilty?

THE DEFENDANT: I do, your Honor.

THE COURT: Okay.

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Would you please tell me, in your own words, what you

did that makes you believe you are guilty of these charges?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes. May I read it?

THE COURT: You may read it as long as you read it slowly so the court reporter can take it down.

THE DEFENDANT: Thank you, your Honor.

I am a certified public accountant. I joined the PCAOB as an inspector in 2011. When I subsequently was assigned to inspect KPMG audits, Brian Sweet was one of my supervisors. Also, while employed at the PCAOB, I became friends with a PCAOB co-worker, Jeff Wada. I was aware that Mr. Sweet, Mr. Wada, and I had a duty not to disclose confidential PCAOB information to outsiders. I was also aware that the PCAOB was subject to oversight by the SEC and that the annual reports of the PCAOB's inspections of KPMG's audits were provided by the PCAOB to the SEC for potential use in its regulatory activities.

In May 2015, Mr. Sweet left the PCAOB and became a partner at KPMG. Later in May 2015, at Mr. Sweet's request while I was still employed at the PCAOB and Mr. Sweet was a KPMG partner, I transmitted to him, via e-mail, a confidential PCAOB document. When Mr. Sweet left the PCAOB and became a partner at KPMG in May 2015, I did not know that he had taken with him a confidential list of KPMG audits which the PCAOB was to inspect later in 2015.

In August 2015, I was hired by KPMG as an employee

with the title of executive director. Mr. Sweet was one of my supervisors at the firm.

In March 2016, during an interstate telephone conversation, Mr. Wada provided to me a partial list of KPMG audits which the PCAOB was to inspect later in 2016. At the time, I was aware that the information was confidential. I, in turn, shared with Mr. Sweet, the confidential information Mr. Wada provided to me. I was subsequently instructed by Mr. Sweet to participate with him and others in reviews of certain of the audit work papers supporting the KPMG audits identified by Mr. Wada before those audits and work papers were inspected by the PCAOB later in 2016. I understood that the purpose of the review was to evaluate certain audit procedures and to improve their documentation in order to improve KPMG's results on the PCAOB's 2016 inspections of the designated KPMG audits.

In February 2017, during an interstate telephone conversation, Mr. Wada provided to me a list of KPMG audits which the PCAOB was to inspect later in 2017. At the time, I was aware that the information was confidential. I again shared with Mr. Sweet the confidential information Mr. Wada provided to me so that KPMG could use the information to improve its 2017 inspection results.

Some of the conduct I have just described took place in Manhattan, in the Southern District of New York.

I knew that my actions were wrong at the time I took them. I deeply regret my actions and I accept full responsibility for my conduct.

THE COURT: Thank you.

Ms. Kramer, does the government believe there is a sufficient factual predicate for the guilty plea or do you believe there is any further inquiry necessary?

MS. KRAMER: Your Honor, only that I think it would be helpful to inquire that the defendant knew -- withdraw that.

It would be helpful to inquire that the defendant, when sharing the confidential information with Mr. Sweet in 2016 and 2017, intended that the information would be utilized.

THE COURT: Ms. Holder, when you did share the information with Mr. Sweet in 2016 and 2017, was it your understanding that the information would be utilized by KPMG?

THE DEFENDANT: When I shared it in 2016 I was not, but in 2017 I was.

THE COURT: So, in 2016 you shared the information -THE DEFENDANT: Yes.

THE COURT: -- but you didn't -- you weren't aware that it would be utilized.

THE DEFENDANT: I shared it with Brian -- or Mr. Sweet and I explained -- I told him at the time I had heard this I was not comfortable with the information and I passed it down and I didn't know what he was going to do with the information

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or if he was going to -- I did not know at that time. But, I certainly understand it now, your Honor.

THE COURT: Did you realize there was a significant likelihood that he might use it?

MS. KRAMER: Yes, sir. I knew he could.

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. BLOCH: May I have one moment, your Honor?

THE COURT: Yes.

(Defendant and counsel conferring)

THE DEFENDANT: And I did, your Honor, as I stated, participate in the reviews in which the information was utilized.

THE COURT: When was that?

THE DEFENDANT: 2016.

THE COURT: In 2016.

Do counsel think there is any additional inquiry necessary?

MS. KRAMER: No, your Honor. I think the government would prove at trial that the defendant intended that the information would be utilized even if she could not foresee exactly how specifically it would be utilized by KPMG but that the purpose of the sharing was that the information would then be used. So, there is no additional factual inquiry that the government would like, your Honor.

THE COURT: Okay.

Mr. Bloch, anything you want to add?

MR. BLOCH: No, your Honor.

THE COURT: Let me ask counsel if you believe there is sufficient factual predicate for the plea.

MS. KRAMER: Yes, your Honor.

MR. BLOCH: Yes, your Honor.

THE COURT: And, Mr. Bloch, do you know of any valid defense that would prevail at trial, or any reason why your client should not be permitted to plead guilty at this time?

MR. BLOCH: No, your Honor.

THE COURT: Ms. Holder, since you acknowledge that you are in fact guilty as charged in the indictment and since I am satisfied that you know your rights including your right to go to trial, that you are aware of the consequences of your plea including the sentence which may be imposed, I find that you are voluntarily and knowingly pleading guilty and I accept your guilty plea and enter judgment of guilty on the counts to which you have pleaded guilty which is Counts One, Two, Four and Five of the indictment.

Now we will turn to sentencing. I will set a date for sentencing. I mentioned the presentence report. There will be an opportunity to have an interview with the probation officer who is preparing the presentence report. Your counsel will be able to be present with you. Anything you do speak about, please make sure you are honest and accurate. Sometimes people

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say things that aren't true and that can have a negative effect at the time of sentencing.

In terms of timing, we normally set sentencing out about three to four months. Do you have a request?

MR. BLOCH: Yes, your Honor.

I would ask that sentencing be put off until after the trial that is scheduled on February 11th. I have conferred with Ms. Kramer and subject, of course, to the Court's approval, I would ask for April 5 as a sentence date; of '19.

THE COURT: Is that fine with the government?

MS. KRAMER: That's fine with the government, your Honor.

THE COURT: That's fine. You said April 5?

MR. BLOCH: Yes, your Honor.

THE COURT: Do you prefer morning or afternoon? I could do either. Is either more convenient?

MR. BLOCH: Morning, your Honor.

THE COURT: Okay. 10:30 in the morning?

MR. BLOCH: That's fine.

THE COURT: 10:30, on April 5, 2019, will be the date for sentencing. Any written submissions will be due two weeks before that for the defendant, and one week before that for the government.

Any objection to the present bail conditions being continued to the date of sentence?

MS. KRAMER: No, your Honor. 1 2 THE COURT: Ms. Holder, the conditions of your 3 pretrial release will continue to apply until the date of sentence so make sure you continue to comply with those 4 5 conditions. 6 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor. 7 THE COURT: And, you must be in the courtroom at the time I have set for sentencing. It is a separate crime if you 8 9 don't show up for sentencing so please make sure you are here 10 for sentencing. 11 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor. 12 THE COURT: Anything further? 13 MS. KRAMER: No, your Honor. Thank you. 14 MR. BLOCH: No, your Honor. Thank you. 15 THE COURT: Thank you very much. We are adjourned. 16 000 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25